

Polygyny:  
A Study of Religious Fundamentalism

Margaret L. Granath

Submitted under the supervision of Professor Kathleen Collins to the University Honors Program at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, *magna cum laude*, in political science.

April 24, 2021

*Acknowledgements:*

I would like to give thanks:

To Prof. Kathleen Collins, for her guidance throughout the writing process of this work. She took a chance on me when I was a freshman, allowing me to work with her as a research assistant for three years of college until I wrote this thesis under her supervision. I am a better writer, a better researcher, and a better thinker due to her mentorship.

To my parents, Al and Teresa. They never restricted what I read as a child (which turned out to be a good thing, because I read *Under the Banner of Heaven* in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, which turned into the inspiration for this thesis). Thank you for fostering my curiosity, then and now. To my siblings, Ellica and Kyle, thank you for allowing me to bore you with conversations about religion at dinner. All of my love.

To Scott Romano, for delivering various fast foods to me during the writing process—I owe you many. Thank you for always reminding me of my worth (and to take a break).

To Morgan McElroy, for his friendship. Editing *your* papers was a much-needed reprieve. Thank you for being there.

To the women of Gamma Phi Beta, for listening each week as I shared the struggles and successes of this writing process. It's hard enough writing a thesis in a pandemic, but I imagine it's harder to have a roommate who is writing a thesis in a pandemic. Thank you for your support, snacks, and affirmations.

And lastly, to my grandmother and namesake, Margaret, and my great-aunt, Mary Lou. They taught me to read when I was 4, and I never looked back. They taught me a love of reading and to always have an extra book on hand (in case you finish the first!). I love you and miss you both.

*Summary:*

Since the beginning of time, humanity has practiced companionship in varying forms. In the past decades, however, one form has received widespread negative attention. Polygamy—or polygyny—as it means to have one male with multiple female spouses, has become synonymous with many religious extremist groups in the world. In the United States, the mainstream Mormon Church has long tried to distance itself from its polygynous past, while fringe, fundamentalist Mormons today still practice polygyny. And, 7,000 miles away from the deserts of Utah, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant has practiced a highly publicized—and brutal—form of polygyny, oftentimes recruiting minors or kidnapping future brides.

This thesis aims to understand the historical implications of polygyny and how it has been warped as a tool of control by fundamentalist movements. In the case of both Mormon fundamentalism and Muslim fundamentalism, practitioners are working towards a common goal of restoring the “true Church” or the Caliphate, respectively. In each case, polygyny is viewed as an essential part of restorationism. Without polygyny, the Church would not be fully true, and the Caliphate would not be completely pure. In contrast to historical motivations behind polygyny, such as ensuring survival, polygyny today has become a weapon of some of the most extreme religious groups in the world to restore the holy times of their prophets.

*Table of Contents:*

I.	Introduction.....	5
II.	Literature Review.....	10
III.	Historical Background.....	16
	a. Historical Background on the Latter Saint Movement.....	16
	b. Background on Polygyny in the Latter Day Saint Movement.....	19
	c. Historical Background on Islam.....	23
	d. Background on Polygyny in Islam.....	27
IV.	Analysis.....	30
	a. Fundamentalism.....	30
	b. The Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.....	32
	c. Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.....	39
V.	Conclusion.....	46
VI.	Bibliography.....	48

## I. Introduction

Separated by 7,000 miles, the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (FLDS) and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) seem completely different at face value. One is little-known group in Southern Utah, where women wear pastel-colored dresses and satellite TV is banned. The other is a global terrorist organization, known for some of the worst acts of violence in the past decade. On the surface, the only similarity between ISIL and the FLDS is their extremism: the FLDS officially left mainstream Mormonism in the late 1800s and ISIL has been largely rejected by the world's Muslim population.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, based out of Salt Lake City, Utah, was officially founded in 1830 in western New York and now boasts over 16 million followers.<sup>1</sup> Islam, on the other hand, has no official centralized leadership; today, nearly twenty-five percent of the world's population identifies as Muslim.<sup>2</sup>

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) shares many core beliefs with the rest of Christianity. Christians though separated by hundreds of denominations, are joined by their shared belief in Jesus Christ as the Abrahamic God's only son. Today, Christians follow the Bible, which consists of the Old Testament and the New Testament. Denominations range from the Catholic Church, which is considered to be a direct line of the Apostle Peter, officiated in Rome, to suburban mega-churches, to Amish or Mennonite communities which live without the use of modern technology. Each of these groups has their own interpretations of the Bible and differing beliefs. The LDS Church—whose members are commonly referred to as the

---

<sup>1</sup>“2019 Statistical Report for April 2020 Conference.” The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 4 April 2020. <https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/2019-statistical-report>. Retrieved 21 February 2021.

<sup>2</sup>Lipka, Michael and Conrad Hackett. “Why Muslims are the world's fastest-growing religious group.” Pew Research Center, 6 April 2017. <http://pewrsr.ch/2nOPNXY>. Retrieved 21 February 2021.

Mormons—use another doctrinal book as well, the Book of Mormon, given to its founding prophet in the 1820s by an angel sent from God.<sup>3</sup>

Islam was founded in the late 7th century, somewhere near modern-day Saudi Arabia. Prophet Muhammad, believed by Muslims to be God’s last true prophet, was alleged to have gone into the rolling caves and received divine inspiration, of which would be compiled into the Qur’an.<sup>4</sup> Today, there are over 1 billion Muslims, mainly residing in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Muslims consider Jesus, and other Biblical men to be prophets, but not divine.

Despite stark outward differences between Islam and the Latter Day Saint movement, there are several similarities between the founding of both religious movements. The Latter Day Saints and Prophet Muhammad’s early followers were both persecuted and cast out of their settlements for practicing religions that their respective governments deemed to be dangerous to the status quo of the day. Both religions were founded by young men, Joseph Smith and Prophet Muhammad, who claimed to have received divine instruction from the Abrahamic God. This communication was amplified by those around them: in Mormonism’s case, the Book of Mormon is inscribed with testimonies of 11 men who claimed to have seen the golden plates upon which the book was inscribed.<sup>5</sup> In the Prophet Muhammad’s case, his close companions compiled his prophetic inscriptions into what would become the Qur’an, and were later given the name of *al-sahabah*, or the companions of the Prophet.<sup>6</sup> Both men became prophets to their respective peoples and both compiled what is considered to be the “final” testament of God’s word to humans.

---

<sup>3</sup> “Joseph Smith.” The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. <https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/joseph-smith>. Retrieved 15 February 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Anderson, Norman. “Islamic Law Today the Background to Islamic Fundamentalism.” *Arab Law Quarterly*, 1987. Vol. 2, No. 4, Pp. 340.

<sup>5</sup> Book of Mormon, pg. viii.

<sup>6</sup> Samina. “Short Stories of Sahabah + List of Resources to Know More About Male Companions of the Prophet.” Aeyina, 30 June 2019 <https://ayeina.com/stories-of-sahaba/>. Retrieved 11 February 2021.

In addition to these similarities, Latter Day Saints and Muslims also share a deep history in polygamy. Polygamy was practiced throughout the Arab world during the time of the rise of Islam.<sup>7</sup> There were different marriage practices throughout the Prophet's eventual Caliphate that today would be considered unorthodox; evidence suggests that there were both polyandrous and polygynous marriages were common. When Joseph Smith started his church, polygamy was largely rejected by Americans in the 1830s as anti-Christian or as an oriental practice. Despite several prominent Biblical figures having been in polygamous marriages, anything that stemmed outside of traditional, monogamous marriages was considered heretical to faith traditions of the time.

Polygamy is defined as the act of having more than one mate; though, the term itself is not gender specific. *Polygyny* is one man having multiple female spouses. The practice of polygyny, despite drawing heavy media attention in just past the decade, is not a new phenomenon. Though the term “polygamy” is used commonly to refer to one man with multiple female spouses, it is incorrect. I will be using the term “polygyny” when referring to one man with multiple female mates, as it is the anthropologically correct term.

Polygyny became foundational to the early beginnings of the LDS Church, and while was not a central focus of the early Islam, was a widely accepted and normalized form of marriage during its beginnings. Though early Christians had long since rejected polygyny after Jesus Christ had rid his followers of certain Jewish traditions, polygyny was still commonplace across much of the Middle East.<sup>8</sup> Prophet Muhammad took care to incorporate local customs into the Qur'an, such as polygyny, to entice potential followers. It was common during the first Caliphate

---

<sup>7</sup> Ahmed, Leila. “Women and the Rise of Islam.” *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*. Yale University Press, 1992. Pp. 41.

<sup>8</sup> Grondin, Fr. Charles. “Why Is Polygamy OK in the Old Testament?” *Catholic Answers*. <https://www.catholic.com/qa/why-is-polygamy-ok-in-the-old-testament>. Retrieved December 29, 2020.

for many followers of Islam to practice polygynous marriages, whereas Prophet Muhammad himself had 13 wives.<sup>9</sup>

Today, there are groups of fundamentalist Muslims and Latter Day Saints who have formed restorationist religious movements with polygyny central to the movement. On the border of Utah and Arizona, the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (FLDS) continues to practice polygyny, despite the practice being renounced by the mainstream LDS Church in 1904.<sup>10</sup> In the Middle East, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), which at its height captured territory the size of Indiana, has practiced a violent and highly profiled version of polygyny within their military camps.<sup>11</sup> Each movement is founded on the basis of returning to the time of purity of their prophet. For the FLDS, it's establishing the one, true church Smith was sent to establish; for ISIL, it means capturing territory to restore the Caliphate. Each movement, though separated by over 7,000 miles, is embodying a radical, reactionary, and restorationist ideology.

Over the course of this paper, I argue that polygyny is used as a weapon of control by fundamentalist, restorationist groups. Existing literature has primarily focused on the historicity and societal utility of polygynous marriages—which *is* crucial to understanding how polygyny can be utilized as a weapon in extremist societies—while negating present day forms of polygyny. It is imperative that we understand how polygyny has evolved from a means of survival and a cultural convention, to an ostracized marriage practice, practiced in only the most extreme of religious groups. This paper will examine polygyny's historical implications within

---

<sup>9</sup> "Wives of the Prophet" in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2009.

<sup>10</sup> "Plural Marriage and Families in Early Utah." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/topics/plural-marriage-and-families-in-early-utah?lang=eng>

<sup>11</sup> "ISIS After the Caliphate." Wilson Center, 21 November 2017. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/isis-after-the-Caliphate-0>



the context of both early Mormonism and early Islam, but specifically explore two modern day extremist movements, chosen due to their current practice of polygyny.

ISIL and the FLDS both embody a unique form of radicalism: an adoption of polygyny to restore the true Caliphate and Church, respectively. These radical views—and subsequent practices—affect every aspect of way of life, and oftentimes leads to violent or illegal action. It should be noted that in both areas where groups operate, the practice of marrying and then consummating marriages of girls younger than 15 is illegal, though the laws regarding these marriages are often unenforced.

The FLDS and ISIL are both radical religious movements that exercise restorationist beliefs. At the beginning of the LDS Church, Christian restorationism was a prominent movement. Christian restorationists worked to restore a more “primitive” or pure form of Christianity: the goal was to restore worship to the time of the New Testament.<sup>12</sup> Today, the restorationist beliefs of Mormon radicals have their origins in Smith’s early Church. Many of the most prominent Islamic radical groups, too, are also restorationist, in that they have a common goal of working to rebuild the time of a pure Caliphate. According to scholar V.S. Naipul, he cites that “good Muslims believe that the best time in the world was the time of the Prophet and the first four, good caliphs.”<sup>13</sup> Al-Qaeda has stressed that one of its goals is to restore a Caliphate.<sup>14</sup> Ansar Al-Sharia, a Libya-based radical Islamist group, claimed Benghazi as part of its Caliphate in 2014.<sup>15</sup> And, post-9/11, Germany banned *Kalifatstaat* in Cologne from operating,

---

<sup>12</sup> Allen, C Leonard and Hughes, Richard T. *Discovering Our Roots: The Ancestry of Churches of Christ*. Abilene, TX: ACU Press, 1988.

<sup>13</sup> V.S. Naipul. *Among the Believers*, in, Heilman, Samuel C. “The Vision from the Madrasa and Bes Medrash: Some Parallels between Islam and Judaism,” in *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*, eds. Marty and Appleby, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. Pp. 73.

<sup>14</sup> Swenson, Paul. “Al Qaeda, Caliphate and Antonio Gramsci: One State, One Region, then One World?” Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, 2009. Pp. 9.

<sup>15</sup> Glenn, Cameron. “Libya’s Islamists: Who They Are - And What They Want.” Wilson Center, 2017.

<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/libyas-islamists-who-they-are-and-what-they-want>. Retrieved January 5, 2021.

due to the group's plans of explosions, terrorism, and establishment of a Caliphate in central Germany.<sup>16</sup>

Polygyny is necessary to these fundamentalist, reactionary religious movements to restore the “trueness” of the Caliphate or Church. And, true restoration is not possible without complying with each ideation of the original Caliphate or Church. These religious movements, however, rely on the exploitation and violation of women, who are, more often than not, below the age of consent. At the core of all fundamentalist movements—whether Mormon, Muslim, Evangelical, Jewish, or Hindu—is a “yearning to return to the mythical order and perfection of the original church.”<sup>17</sup> For ISIL and the FLDS, restorationism is not just a part of the movement: *it is the motivating factor*. And, at the intersection of these groups' restorationism and radicalism lies polygyny. Today, this marriage practice is used as weapon of control for some of the most fundamentalist movements on Earth today.

## II. Literature Review

Previous scholarship has aimed to understand the foundations of polygamy: both in the historical context as a means of survival, and today, as a form of marriage. In *Polygamy: A Cross-Cultural Analysis*, Dr. Miriam Koktvedgaard Zeitzen, lists five reasons why polygamy continues to be a foundation of certain societies across the globe: culture; politics, power and prestige; and production and reproduction. While the groups I will be examining, the FLDS and ISIL, are two groups bound by strict religious doctrine and patriarchal rule, and have their

---

<sup>16</sup> “Massive German anti-militant raid.” CNN, 11 December 2003. <https://edition.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/europe/12/11/germany.islamic.reut/>. Retrieved 5 January 2021.

<sup>17</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 137.

foundations in power and prestige, it is necessary to understand the broader context of polygamous marriages to understand how the marriage practice can be weaponized.

Polygamy can be—and is—a foundational element of differing societies across the globe. Zeitzen goes into great detail examining the Inuits of Arctic Alaska, Canada, and Greenland, who “appeared to accommodate every form of polygamy imaginable.”<sup>18</sup> The Inuits mainly practiced monogamy, however their main goal when mating was child rearing. Often, if an Inuit man could provide enough resources, he could have two wives: this man was often celebrated in Inuit culture. “Men who had three wives were hence revered...because they must possess extraordinary power and wisdom.”<sup>19</sup> Polygyny was often only accepted, or encouraged if the first wife was barren, or only gave birth to girls. The Inuits also sometimes practiced polyandry: due to the widespread practice of polygyny, polyandry also rises as a supplement, though in a lesser amount than polygyny. The many forms of polygamy that the Inuit practiced exhibit the complexities of its practice, and the uniqueness and flexibility of the Inuit communities. Polygamy was not a means of power on which Inuit society was built, but a tool to survive in a harsh environment.

Furthermore, Zeitzen also labels politics, power, and prestige as three foundations of polygamy. I believe this to be the foundation of polygyny in patriarchal, religious communities such as the FLDS or ISIL. Zeitzen states that polygyny can serve as a tool to cement political alliances, or create alliances through the use of co-wives.<sup>20</sup> Zeitzen also argues that polygyny can serve as a tool or a weapon of a power, where the system “of social stratification in which the old, typically the old men, dominate the young.”<sup>21</sup> This coexists well with Zeitzen’s theory of

---

<sup>18</sup> Zeitzen, Miriam Koktvedgaard. *Polygamy: A cross-cultural analysis*. New York: Berg, 2008. Pp. 43.

<sup>19</sup> Zeitzen, Miriam Koktvedgaard. *Polygamy: A cross-cultural analysis*. New York: Berg, 2008. Pp. 44.

<sup>20</sup> Zeitzen, Miriam Koktvedgaard. *Polygamy: A cross-cultural analysis*. New York: Berg, 2008. Pp. 48.

<sup>21</sup> Zeitzen, Miriam Koktvedgaard. *Polygamy: A cross-cultural analysis*. New York: Berg, 2008. Pp. 50.

polygyny as a means of prestige: “multiple wives are typically a status symbols denoting wealth and power for the husband.”<sup>22</sup>

Prestige and power often intersect well: when older men have amassed older wives, thereby accumulating more prestige in the community they inhabit, they therefore have more power, allowing them to control the mating, marriages, politics, and sexual relations of their communities. Elders can “monopolize young women and thus wield power over the younger men by hindering them from establishing independent households...the elders’ dominance over the matrimonial system allows them not only to control young people, but also to reproduce structures of dependence of society by manipulating the exchange of women.”<sup>23</sup>

Polygyny in fundamentalist religious sects is often way of channeling power into social structure, in contrast to the Inuits of the Arctic, where polygyny was a means of survival. This societal structure keeps the patriarchy in charge of the community, as it rarely allows any younger man to assert autonomy, while also keeping the social fate of a women in the hands of male elders. In both the FLDS and ISIL, marriages are not determined by love or by the participants themselves, but instead dictated by societal elders.<sup>24</sup> In the FLDS, the prophets of the church dictate who will marry whom: sometimes forcing “divinely-inspired” marriages between young, menstruating women 14 or 15 years in age, to one of the high-ranking prophets in the church. Given this unique structure, there is also an imbalance between married young men and married young women, as the birth rates for males and females are still the same. In order to eliminate possible male rivals, elders in the FLDS will often cast out younger men—

---

<sup>22</sup> Zeitzen, Miriam Koktvedgaard. *Polygamy: A cross-cultural analysis*. New York: Berg, 2008. Pp. 53.

<sup>23</sup> Zeitzen, Miriam Koktvedgaard. *Polygamy: A cross-cultural analysis*. New York: Berg, 2008. Pp. 51.

<sup>24</sup> Watson, Marianne. “The 1948 Secret Marriage of Louis J. Barlow: Origins of the FLDS Placement Marriage.” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 2007. Vol 40. Pp. 83.

often at the age of 14 or 15—sometimes for small reasons such as watching TV.<sup>25</sup> This elimination keeps the gender ratio imbalanced enough for polygyny to continue.

In *The Political Economy for Women's Support for Fundamentalist Islam*, authors Lisa Blaydes and Drew A. Lizner work to uncover reasoning behind why women are attracted to fundamentalist sects of Islam. Considering many tenets of fundamentalist Islam can be patriarchal in nature—the practice of polygyny included—it is hard to understand why women would be drawn to practice fundamentalist Islam. Blaydes and Lizner hypothesize that a lack of economic opportunity “creates incentive for women to prioritize marriage over paid employment and that in order to facilitate marriage, women may choose to adopt fundamentalist beliefs.”<sup>26</sup> Blaydes and Lizner found that “women with unfavorable economic prospects have more to gain on the marriage market by adopting fundamentalist beliefs than on the employment market by adopting secular...beliefs.”<sup>27</sup> This is further supported by Joseph Smith's biographer, Fawn Brodie, who stated that early women participants in polygynous marriages found security in the LDS Church's offering of spouses who provided financially: “It was easy, therefore, for many of the penniless and lonely women converts to slip into polygamy.”<sup>28</sup> For many of the earliest converts to Mormonism, polygyny's “success” may have been attributed Smith's so-called true and holy teachings. However, for women who voluntarily joined polygynous marriages, escaping poverty was often a more powerful motivator. This pattern continues in ISIL territory, where the poor are targeted to be jihadi brides: ISIL recruiters target women without a sense of belonging to join the territory, particularly those in need of financial support. ISIL wives are promised economic security if they live in the Caliphate territory: “these groups claim to safeguard

---

<sup>25</sup> Borger, Julian. “The lost boys, thrown out of US sect so that older men can marry more wives.” *The Guardian*, 2005. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/jun/14/usa.julianborger>. Retrieved 30 December 2020.

<sup>26</sup> Blaydes, Lisa and Linzer, Drew. *The Political Economy of Women's Support for Fundamentalist Islam*. World Politics, 2008. Vol, 60. Pp. 587.

<sup>27</sup> Blaydes, Lisa and Linzer, Drew. *The Political Economy of Women's Support for Fundamentalist Islam*. World Politics, 2008. Vol, 60. Pp. 604.

<sup>28</sup> Brodie, Fawn. *No Man Knows My History*. Alfred K. Knopf, 1971. Pp. 304.

women's emotional, sexual, and financial support after the death of their husbands and at the same time ensure their husbands that their wives will be taken care of by the state.”<sup>29</sup> Salaries are provided to jihadi fighters, but also to widows and single women who are waiting to be married.<sup>30</sup>

There is a lack of scholarship focusing on companionship as a motivator for women entering into polygynous marriages. In more liberal, polygynist Mormon families, companionship of sister wives is one of the most oft-cited reasons for entering into a polygynous marriage.<sup>31</sup> The ability for one wife to act as a breadwinner, while another does the majority of the child-rearing, while another can bounce between the two roles, is often hailed as a great success of polygyny in a modern context: women are *not* bound to gender roles. However, polygynous families existing outside of extremist Mormon contexts are rare, and data is insufficient. (Information for what a “normal” polygynous family in the United States often comes from TV depictions: HBO's *Big Love*, TLC's *Sister Wives* or *My Five Wives*.) Companionship, too, amongst wives is also hailed as a benefit of polygyny in fundamentalist Muslim communities: women in ISIL territory often recruit young women to join the group by promising them not only a romantic partner, but the constant availability of female friendship.

In *Polygyny: A Cross-Cultural Study*, author Peter Bretschneider analyzes many different causes for polygyny: environmental, economic, societal, and sociological factors. The work itself is a comprehensive study on nearly any factor that could contribute to polygynous relationships. One factor, in particular, appears especially relevant to fundamentalist religious groups, like the FLDS or ISIL. Bretschneider hypothesizes that fraternal interest groups may serve as a strong

---

<sup>29</sup> Khelghat-Doost, Hamoon. *The Strategic Logic of Women in Jihadi Organizations* Springer International Publishing. Kindle Edition. Pp. 176.

<sup>30</sup> Khelghat-Doost, Hamoon. *The Strategic Logic of Women in Jihadi Organizations*. Springer International Publishing. Kindle Edition. Pp. 247.

<sup>31</sup> “Meet Kody and the Wives,” *Sister Wives*, season 1, episode 1. TLC, 26 September 2010. <https://www.tlc.com/tv-shows/sister-wives/full-episodes/meet-kody-and-the-wives>.

indicator for polygynous communities.<sup>32</sup> A fraternal interest group is male-dominated community, formed over similar needs or interests: smaller mainstream Mormon and Muslim communities could fall into this category, given they are patriarchal in nature. (However, being a fraternal interest group does not automatically lead into polygyny; it could be a contributing factor, though.)

Bretschneider also lists the relevance of external versus internal warfare. External warfare is war or conflict outside of a community, whereas internal warfare is conflict within a community. Bretschneider suggests “that societies practicing primarily external warfare will be less likely to have strong fraternal interest groups, and hence, are less likely to practice polygyny.”<sup>33</sup> Societies facing external conflict may have a strong national identity, inextricably linked to overcoming enemies; they are less likely to wage war amongst themselves internally. When they have fewer external enemies, societies could gravitate towards internal conflict: warfare concerning leadership, values, and status. Scholar Keith Otterbein, “views fraternal interest groups as a *cause* of internal warfare,” or groups within a community competing over differing values.<sup>34</sup> In societies based primarily around religion, where debate on holy texts is great—such as the early Mormon pioneers and current Islamic sects—internal warfare between communities may see polygyny because of conflict, not the cause of it. Polygyny in fundamentalist Mormon and Islamic communities is not a result of warfare in a traditional sense (i.e., less men to marry due to war-induced death, ergo the community resorts to polygyny). Instead, I suspect that polygyny in these fundamentalist groups is a *result* of a fringe faction of a fraternal interest group breaking away from the larger faction. Polygyny could be both the cause

---

<sup>32</sup> Bretschneider, Peter. *Polygyny: A Cross-Cultural Study*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1995. Pp. 43.

<sup>33</sup> Bretschneider, Peter. *Polygyny: A Cross-Cultural Study*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1995. Pp. 43.

<sup>34</sup> Keith Otterbein in Bretschneider, Peter. *Polygyny: A Cross-Cultural Study*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1995. Pp. 43.

of the warfare (a difference in opinion) and the result (the group is now openly practicing polygyny). This phenomenon is exhibited in the fringe Mormon faction, the FLDS, establishing a community hundreds of miles away from the mainstream LDS Church in Salt Lake City in the early 20th century to practice polygyny in peace.

### **III. Historical Background**

#### **A. Historical Background on the Latter Day Saint Movement**

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, today commonly referred to as the LDS Church or the Mormon Church, was founded in western New York in 1830 by Joseph Smith. According to the official LDS Church doctrine, Joseph Smith was confused about which church to join and went into the woods near his house to pray; he was greeted with a vision of Jesus Christ and God the Father, who told him all present churches were false. Smith would soon know the fullness of the gospel at a later date.

Indeed, Smith is probably best known for translating the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ, after receiving golden plates written in reformed Egyptian from an angel of God.<sup>35</sup> The plates tell of Jesus Christ coming to the Americas after his resurrection in the Bible's New Testament.<sup>36</sup> The Book of Mormon became the foundation of Smith's new religious endeavor, the Latter Day Saint movement.

To understand the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saint's practice of polygyny, it is necessary to first understand from where their religious practices came. The founder of the Latter-day Saint movement, Joseph Smith, was born into a poor, farming family in

---

<sup>35</sup> Hamblin, William J. "Reformed Egyptian." Review of Books on the Book of Mormon 1989–2011, 2007. Vol. 19: No. 1, Article 7.

<sup>36</sup> "Joseph Smith." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. <https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/joseph-smith>. Retrieved 15 February 2021.



Vermont.<sup>37</sup> “The child was born into an insecurity that in a lifetime of thirty-eight years he was never able to escape,” writes Fawn Brodie, the controversial biographer of Smith.<sup>38</sup> (Her landmark work, considered to be the basis of all known information on Smith, *No Man Knows My History*, eventually led to her excommunication from the Church.)

Smith was brought up with a backdrop of crushing debt and faltering economy. New England, at the time, was hurting from an economic downturn, and the Smith family suffered. The family was plagued with illness, perpetual crop failures, and debt. The Smiths moved multiple times in New England, until finally settling in Western New York, in the hopes of establishing a more fertile, successful farm in Joseph’s teenage years.<sup>39</sup>

As LDS history teaches, Joseph went to a wooded area, at the age of 14, to pray for guidance as to which religion to join; young Joseph saw Jesus Christ and God the Father who told him “they were all wrong,” and that there was no true church on the Earth. At this time, God left Joseph little instruction for how to create the true church. It wasn’t until 1823, that Joseph received another vision: this time by the Angel Moroni. “He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fullness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it.”<sup>40</sup> Joseph, however, did not receive the fullness of the Gospel until 1827, when he and his new wife, Emma, received the golden plates from the Hill Cumorah, in Western New York.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Essentials in Church History*. Salt Lake City: The Deseret Book Company Joseph Fielding Smith. Pp 25.

<sup>38</sup> Brodie, Fawn. *No Man Knows My History*. Alfred K. Knopf, 1971. Pp. 7.

<sup>39</sup> Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Essentials in Church History*. Salt Lake City: The Deseret Book Company Joseph Fielding Smith. Pp. 38.

<sup>40</sup> Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Essentials in Church History*. Salt Lake City: The Deseret Book Company Joseph Fielding Smith. Pp. 51.

<sup>41</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 59.

The plates, however, were written in Egyptian characters. A language that has since been labeled as “reformed Egyptian” by the current LDS Church.<sup>42</sup> Joseph Smith, who had an avid fascination with necromancy, magic, and mysticism, translated the pages of the gold plates using seer stones.<sup>43</sup> Throughout high school, Joseph gained a bit of a reputation as a con artist: determined to make a quick buck, and forego the fate of his father, he began the practice of money-digging just shy of his fourteenth birthday.<sup>44</sup> Joseph would comb the hills and caves around Palmyra, New York to try and find Native American artifacts or gold. A friend of his in school introduced him to “seer stones,” by way of looking into an upturned hat with a special peep stone at the bottom: Smith was treated to magical visions. Over the course of his lifetime, he found three different seer stones around the hills of Palmyra. To translate the gold plates—which would become the Book of Mormon—Joseph would place his seer stones into an upturned hat, with the plates nearby, and he would recite the translations.<sup>45</sup> “Joseph explained that the record was a history of the Indians from the earliest times. Like the Bible, it was written by prophets and divided in books.”<sup>46</sup> The translation would then be copied down by a scribe. After the translation was finished in 1829, Moroni returned to take the plates back, and Joseph Smith crowd-funded the first publication of the Book of Mormon.<sup>47</sup>

At the time of Smith’s encounter, New York state was serving as a birthplace for numerous religious movements, referred to now as the “Burned Over District.”<sup>48</sup> The Seventh-Day Adventist movement, Jehovah’s Witnesses organization, and the Shaker revival are some of

---

<sup>42</sup> Hamblin, William J. “Reformed Egyptian.” Review of Books on the Book of Mormon 1989–2011, 2007. Vol. 19: No. 1, Article 7.

<sup>43</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 61.

<sup>44</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 56.

<sup>45</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 61.

<sup>46</sup> Brodie, Fawn. *No Man Knows My History*. Alfred K. Knopf, 1971. Pp. 43.

<sup>47</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 62.

<sup>48</sup> Cross, Whitney R. *The Burned-over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800–1850*. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1950. Pp. 30.

the most known religious organizations to come out of this period in New York. Smith's new testament of Jesus Christ and Church were hardly a new phenomenon within the context of the time period. Following Smith's translation of the Book of Mormon, he quickly became a savior to a few as well as an apostate to many. He was cast out of New York, then cast out of midwestern states until he was killed by an anti-polygamous mob in Missouri.<sup>49</sup> Today, the LDS Church considers him a martyr.

### B. Background on Polygyny in the Latter Day Saint Movement

Against a backdrop of red rolling foothills, straddling the Utah-Arizona border, lies a robust town, home to at least three polygamist communities, the largest of which is the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.<sup>50</sup> Colorado City, Arizona and Hildale, Utah have long been refuge for followers of Joseph Smith who wish to practice the early LDS Church's doctrine of polygyny without fear of government intervention. Despite the practice officially being revoked by the Salt Lake City-based church in 1890, and polygyny being an illegal practice in both Arizona and Utah, fundamentalist Mormons continually practice this doctrine under the murky guise of spiritual wifery and religious freedom.<sup>51</sup>

The acreage for the FLDS's compound was purchased by a monogamist in 1913, though it did not become a refuge for Latter Day fundamentalists until 1935, when a group who had been excommunicated for practicing polygyny, sought sanctuary on the land.<sup>52</sup> It was decided, amongst Salt Lake polygamists and excommunicated Latter Day Saints, that the land was far

---

<sup>49</sup> Smith, M. In *Revelation, Resistance, and Mormon Polygamy: The Introduction and Implementation of the Principle, 1830–1853*. Boulder, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 2013. Pp. 10. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt4cgjt1.11>. Retrieved 12 January 2021.

<sup>50</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp 10.

<sup>51</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp 252 and Pp. 12.

<sup>52</sup> Zoellner, Tom. "Polygamy: Throughout its history, Colorado City has been home for those who believe in virtues of plural marriage," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, 28 June 1998. Retrieved 12 January 2021.

enough away from the influence of the mainstream LDS Church to affect on their efforts to restore the “true” gospel of Jesus Christ.<sup>53</sup> The state line borders are strategic: anyone trying to escape from a Utah lawman can easily cross the border, into Arizona jurisdiction, and vice versa. Since a disastrous raid on the land in 1953, led by Arizona Governor Howard Pyle, which prompted more sympathy for the fundamentalists than retribution, the FLDS have been largely left alone.<sup>54</sup>

Despite its current illegality, the practice of Mormon polygyny in America dates to 1835, when whispers that the Prophet Joseph Smith had “seduced a seventeen-year-old orphan girl whom [his wife] had taken into the family.”<sup>55</sup> Instead of gossip about an illicit affair, it was whispers of polygyny that followed Smith.

Polygyny was slowly introduced to the small circle of Church elites Smith had hand-selected, including future presidents of the Church such as Brigham Young and John Taylor.<sup>56</sup> Today, these men are revered by the LDS Church as fellow martyrs and brave pioneers, trekking across thousands of miles of desert and plain to bring converts to Utah, while no mention of their polygynous marriages are mentioned by the LDS Church. The LDS Church mentions briefly that “plural marriage” was practiced as a way to increase the number of children born into the Church and provide economically for women, though the actual motivations behind Smith’s introduction of polygyny have long been attributed to his propensity for extramarital affairs.<sup>57</sup> <sup>58</sup> It’s been well-reported that Smith had an inclination towards young women, and increasingly began

---

<sup>53</sup> Zoellner, Tom. “Polygamy: Throughout its history, Colorado City has been home for those who believe in virtues of plural marriage,” *The Salt Lake Tribune*, 28 June 1998. Retrieved 12 January 2021.

<sup>54</sup> Driggs, K. After the manifesto: Modern polygamy and fundamentalist Mormons. *Journal of Church and State*, 1990. Vol, 32, Pp. 362.

<sup>55</sup> Brodie, Fawn. *No Man Knows My History*. Alfred K. Knopf, 1971. Pp. 181.

<sup>56</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp 119.

<sup>57</sup> “Plural Marriage in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 2014. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics/plural-marriage-in-the-church-of-jesus-christ-of-latter-day-saints?lang=eng>. Retrieved 12 January 2021.

<sup>58</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 119.

looking into polygynous examples of famed Biblical figures in order to assure himself that he was following on a path of moral righteousness. “Joseph found ample proof that this was indeed God’s intent, wherein the polygamous customs of Abraham and Jacob—the patriarchs from whom the Mormons where directly decide—were recounted without reproach or shame.”<sup>59</sup> According to Smith’s biographer, Fawn Brodie, Smith was especially fascinated with Jacob's polygynous marriages.<sup>60</sup>

He [Smith] was fond of pointing to the commandment in Exodus: “And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife.” The sin of adultery lay not in the act itself but in the subsequent dissertation.

Smith’s efforts to make polygyny mainstream were largely unsuccessful; his 1842 pamphlet on the holiness of polygyny, on which Smith is listed as a publisher, was written off by early members of the Church.<sup>61</sup> In 1843, Smith announced the sacred revelation of polygyny to his closest circle and privately conducted marriages in his home in Kirtland and in the Mormon settlement of Nauvoo.<sup>62</sup> The revelation on polygyny is now formalized as Doctrine and Covenants 132 in the LDS Church.<sup>63</sup> (Doctrine and Covenants are a “collection of divine revelations and inspired declarations” largely received and compiled by Joseph Smith. Practitioners of the LDS Church, including offshoots, consider these revelations to be a standard

---

<sup>59</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 119.

<sup>60</sup> Brodie, Fawn. *No Man Knows My History*. Alfred K. Knopf, 1971. Pg. 298

<sup>61</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 116.

<sup>62</sup> Smith, Merina. “Integration, 1843.” *Revelation, Resistance, and Mormon Polygamy: The Introduction and Implementation of the Principle, 1830–1853*. University Press of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, 2013. Pp 154. Accessed 12 January 2021.

<sup>63</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 132. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Retrieved 12 January 2020. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/132?lang=eng>

work, along with the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Pearl of Great Price.<sup>64</sup>) However, this revelation was not revealed to the entire faith until years after his death, by which time, the Mormons had been cast out of the Midwest and began an infamous journey to present-day Utah.<sup>65</sup>

Early leaders of the Church feared that by openly conducting and practicing polygyny in settled territories, further violence against Mormons would ensue. It was not until the early Mormon pioneers reached Utah territory, a place that they considered well beyond the reach of any government, that polygyny was practiced openly, and plural marriages were performed by Church leaders. On the trail west, Brigham Young, the predecessor to Joseph Smith, “attempted to maximize the cohesion and minimize the chaos by severely limiting the number of marriages...and occasionally using guilt and prophecy to bring people into line.”<sup>66</sup> At polygyny’s height in the early Church, it is estimated that nearly half of Mormons living in Utah territory practiced polygyny.<sup>67</sup>

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the United States made a conditional offer to the Mormons for statehood: Utah could become part of the country, if polygyny was never legalized.<sup>68</sup> The Mormons accepted, and Church leaders began issuing manifestos disavowing polygyny. In 1890, after new polygynous marriages were banned by then-Church President Wilford Woodruff, polygynous marriages began to slow.<sup>69</sup> However, the practice was not officially disavowed until

---

<sup>64</sup> Introduction to the Doctrine and Covenants. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/dc-testament/introduction?lang=eng>. Retrieved 12 January 2020.

<sup>65</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 120.

<sup>66</sup> Smith, M. Revelation, Resistance, and Mormon Polygamy: The Introduction and Implementation of the Principle, 1830–1853. Boulder, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 2013. Pp. 214. Retrieved 12 January 2021.

<sup>67</sup> Smith, M. Revelation, Resistance, and Mormon Polygamy: The Introduction and Implementation of the Principle, 1830–1853. Boulder, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 2013. Pp. 11. Retrieved 12 January 2021.

<sup>68</sup> Smith, M. Revelation, Resistance, and Mormon Polygamy: The Introduction and Implementation of the Principle, 1830–1853. Boulder, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 2013. Pp. 11. Retrieved 12 January 2021.

<sup>69</sup> Smith, M. Revelation, Resistance, and Mormon Polygamy: The Introduction and Implementation of the Principle, 1830–1853. Boulder, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 2013. Pp. 11. Retrieved 12 January 2021

President Joseph F. Smith revealed in 1904 that the Church would not recognize marriages that did not align with the law of the land.<sup>70</sup>

Since then, the LDS Church has worked to affirm its stance on monogamy: The Family, A Proclamation to the World, a 1995 speech from then-president Gordon B. Hinkley, has become an oft-cited piece of doctrine to modern-day members of the Church. “We, the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, solemnly proclaim that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God.”<sup>71</sup> (Many of my Mormon friends growing up had this speech hung up in their homes.) However, the LDS Church has yet to formally revoke the doctrine on polygyny, instead stating that it was a “commandment of God at that time.”<sup>72</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 132 remains part of the standard works of the LDS Church today, and the basis for Mormon fundamentalists’ marriage practices.

### C. Historical Background on Islam

Islam is one of the world’s major religions, second only to Christianity in population, though it is the fastest growing religion in the world.<sup>73</sup> Roughly 24% of the world’s population belongs to the predominantly Middle Eastern religion, founded by Prophet Muhammad in 610. Muslims believe that Prophet Muhammad was the last divine prophet to come to Earth. In contrast to many Christian denominations, who believe in a three-part divine being, Muslims disavow Jesus’ divinity and consider submitting to God the focal point of their religion. In

---

<sup>70</sup> “Statement by President Joseph F. Smith.” The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, May 1904.

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/topics/plural-marriage-and-families-in-early-utah/joseph-f-smith-statement?lang=eng>

<sup>71</sup> Hinkley, Gordon B. The Family, A Proclamation to the World. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1995.

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/the-family-a-proclamation-to-the-world/the-family-a-proclamation-to-the-world?lang=eng>. Retrieved 12 January 2021.

<sup>72</sup> “Plural Marriage in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 2014.

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics/plural-marriage-in-the-church-of-jesus-christ-of-latter-day-saints?lang=eng>. Retrieved 12 January 2021.

<sup>73</sup> Lipka, Michael. “Muslims and Islam: Key findings in the U.S. and around the world.” Pew Research Center, 9 August 2017.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/08/09/muslims-and-islam-key-findings-in-the-u-s-and-around-the-world/>. Retrieved 10 January 2021.

addition to Prophet Muhammad's revelations, compiled as the Qur'an, Prophet Muhammad's other divine teachings are known as *hadiths* and are taught as doctrine today—in a similar fashion as Joseph Smith's Doctrine and Covenants.

Islamic fundamentalism has been around for as long as Islam has been around. According to scholar Said Amir Arjomand, in his essay, "Unity and Diversity in Islamic Fundamentalism," the foundations for Islamism were founded with the Shi'ite rebellion of Mukhtar in the 680s, about fifty years after the Prophet Muhammad's death.<sup>74</sup> However, "fundamentalism proper appears in Islamic history somewhat later. In historical perspectives, fundamentalism can be conceived as the endeavor to purify pristine Islam...by means of a return to its scriptural foundations."<sup>75</sup> The Qur'an was not fully established and compiled until nearly a century after the Prophet's death, which led to a gap in the creation of fundamentalist movements. Following the creation of the complete Qur'an, multiple Islamic sects sprung about, each with their own interpretations of Qur'anic works.

Islam, additionally, has no central leadership, and does not allow for a mediating role—like a priest or pastor—between a believer and God.<sup>76</sup> Unlike many Christian churches—historically and in modernity—which are often led by a specific pastor with religious training, who then reports to a governing body, Islam has a looser structure. There are no set governing organizations for mosques with doctrinal oversight, and no specific training requirements to follow. In much of the Middle East, the *ulama*, or teaching body of a particular Islamic

---

<sup>74</sup> Arjomand, Said Amir. "Unity and Diversity in Islamic Fundamentalism," in *Fundamentalisms Comprehended* Eds. Marty and Appleby, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. Pp. 179.

<sup>75</sup> Arjomand, Said Amir. "Unity and Diversity in Islamic Fundamentalism," in *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*. Eds. Marty and Appleby, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. Pp. 179.

<sup>76</sup> Heilman, Samuel C. "The Vision from the Madrasa and Bes Medrash: Some Parallels between Islam and Judaism," in *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*. Eds. Marty and Appleby, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. Pp. 81.



community, are men who have chosen to devote their time to studying the Qur'an and the Prophet.<sup>77</sup>

This structure—or, I suppose, lack thereof—can allow for radical doctrine to infiltrate communities with ease. With no governing oversight, it is easy for a radical *ulama*, or radical *imam*, to begin speaking specific doctrine. (For perspective, imagine if a Catholic priest started spouting anti-Papacy doctrine in the middle of Sunday mass. He would quickly be thrown out, due to the many layers of governing bodies.)

Arjomand cites that the foundation for modern-day Islamist fundamentalism is the Hanbalite movement of the in the ninth century.<sup>78</sup> The Hanbalite is one of the four Sunni schools of law, and is still in operation today, and “maintained that the Qur'an was the eternal Word of God and insisted on unquestioning acceptance of the scriptural propositions.”<sup>79</sup> The Hanbalite movement is the strictest of all of the Sunni schools of law, and maintains traditionalist practices.<sup>80</sup> Today, a majority of Hanbalite practitioners are based out of areas where extreme branches of Islam are practiced, like Saudi Arabia, where fundamentalist movements are widely followed.<sup>81</sup> This includes a traditionalist interpretation of *shari'a* law—an oft misunderstood piece of Islamic doctrine by Westerners.

*Shari'a* is a disputed term. In the West, many consider *shari'a* to be a form of Islamic law—or *fiqh*. In actuality, *shari'a* is derived from the same set of words for “path” or “way” and is not “law in the sense of legal rules.”<sup>82</sup> *Shari'a* is a guide for going through life; *fiqh*, on the

---

<sup>77</sup> Heilman, Samuel C. “The Vision from the Madrasa and Bes Medrash: Some Parallels between Islam and Judaism,” in *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*. Eds. Marty and Appleby, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. Pp. 81.

<sup>78</sup> Arjomand, Said Amir. “Unity and Diversity in Islamic Fundamentalism.” in *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*. Eds. Marty and Appleby, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. Pp. 180.

<sup>79</sup> Arjomand, Said Amir. “Unity and Diversity in Islamic Fundamentalism.” in *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*. Eds. Marty and Appleby, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. Pp. 180.

<sup>80</sup> Sardar, Ziauddin. *Mecca: The Sacred City*. Bloomsbury, 2014. Pp. 100.

<sup>81</sup> Rubin, Barry. *Guide to Islamist Movements*. M.E. Sharpe, 2009. Volume 2, Pp. 310.

<sup>82</sup> Ashmawy in *Women, Islam and Everyday Life: Renegotiating Polygamy in Indonesia* by Nina Nurmila. London/New York: Routledge, 2009. Pp. 40.

other hand, refers to Islamic jurisprudence. In more fundamentalist interpretations, *shari'a* is equated to *fiqh*.

*Shari'a* had been separate from the state, and typically left up to individual interpretation until the 1950s, when legislative action in Egypt, Iran, Syria, Tunisia, Algeria, and Iraq all took initiative to impose *shari'a* doctrine: “an effort it exerted, in tune with neo-Hanbalism to ‘decontaminate’ practice from ‘pagan.’”<sup>83</sup> Following this extension of state power, groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood out of Egypt and the Iranian Revolution, started gaining massive support and power.<sup>84</sup> There is much debate among scholars today as to whether a repressive regime creates fundamentalism, or fundamentalist movements leads to a repressive regime.

In Norman Anderson’s speech, “Islamic Law Today the Background to Islamic Fundamentalism,” he claims that in early Islam, practicing Muslims had the “right the of *ijtihad*,” or going to back to original sources of law.<sup>85</sup> However, as the schools of law evolved this process of deduction became increasingly curtailed, and the authoritative sources came to be the decisions of individuals, not the courts.<sup>86</sup> This led to an injection of religion to Islamic law, a practice that still exists today, and has diluted the difference between *shari'a* law (doctrine from the Qur'an) and man’s law from governing bodies outside the scope of Islam. “The Muslim concept of the Sharia is very much wider than would be covered by any modern definition of law in the West. Whereas [Westerners] seek legal advice about such matters as the purchase of a house...a Muslim will consult his legal adviser on what conduct would, or would not, be pleasing to God.”<sup>87</sup> The Islamic practice of consulting lawyers or legal advisors on whether an action

---

<sup>83</sup> Sivan, Emmanuel. “Enclave Culture,” in *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*. Eds. Marty and Appleby, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. Pp. 30.

<sup>84</sup> Arjomand, Said Amir. “Unity and Diversity in Islamic Fundamentalism.” in *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*. Eds. Marty and Appleby, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. Pp. 188.

<sup>85</sup> Anderson, Norman. “Islamic Law Today the Background to Islamic Fundamentalism.” *Arab Law Quarterly*, 1987. Pp. 342.

<sup>86</sup> Anderson, Norman. “Islamic Law Today the Background to Islamic Fundamentalism.” *Arab Law Quarterly*, 1987. Pp 342.

<sup>87</sup> Anderson, Norman. “Islamic Law Today the Background to Islamic Fundamentalism.” *Arab Law Quarterly*, 1987. Pp 342.

would be pleasing to God, coupled with a lack of an authoritative body, can leave certain Islamic communities susceptible to Islamic fundamentalism, particularly those who have a lack of resources or who live in isolated communities.

#### D. Background on Polygyny in Islam

Polygamy—and its various forms—was a common marriage practice in the Arab world during the beginning times of Islam.<sup>88</sup> It has been well-reported that the Prophet Muhammad had 13 wives.<sup>89</sup> The Qur'an, however, only allows for four wives; common interpretation states that the husband must take care of each wife equally.<sup>90</sup>

In contrast to Joseph Smith and the Mormons, who hid polygyny away under the sanctity of Utah territory, polygyny in the Arab world in the 7th century was common. It was a usual conversion tactic amongst early Muslims to adapt the culture of those who they wanted to convert.<sup>91</sup> The introduction and acceptance of Islam worked to consolidate and affirm many familial practices throughout the Arab world. For one, society shifted from one that was casually matriarchal to staunchly patriarchal: "Islam therefore displaced a matriarchal order with a patriarchal one."<sup>92</sup> Many historians cite the power struggle after Prophet Muhammad's death to the new emphasis on male power. Furthermore, there was little uniformity in marriage practices and "no single, fixed institution of marriage."<sup>93</sup> Evidence shows that prior to the introduction of Islam, monogamy and variations of polyamory were practiced; divorce was also common. The

---

<sup>88</sup> Ahmed, Leila. "Women and the Rise of Islam" *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*. Yale University Press, 1992. Pp. 41 and 44.

<sup>89</sup> "Wives of the Prophet" in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2009.

<sup>90</sup> Qur'an 4:3

<sup>91</sup> Ahmed, Leila. "Women and the Rise of Islam" *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*. Yale University Press, 1992. Pp. 45.

<sup>92</sup> Ahmed, Leila. "Women and the Rise of Islam" *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*. Yale University Press, 1992. Pp. 43.

<sup>93</sup> Ahmed, Leila. "Women and the Rise of Islam" *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*. Yale University Press, 1992. Pp. 43.

introduction of Islam worked to solidify some forms marriage: mainly polygyny and monogamy. Along with the consolidation of the patriarchy and polygyny, a dominate narrative began to emerge—men had “proprietary rights to female sexuality;” while opposing cultural customs—polyandry or matrilineal customs—were prohibited.<sup>94</sup> Islam rapidly spread and transformed the social landscape of the Arab world.

Today, there is still a dominant social narrative amongst Islamic fundamentalists that women are sexual beings, needing to be controlled by their male counterparts. According to Hamoon Khelghat-Doost in *The Strategic Logic of Women in Jihadi Organizations*, this belief is sometimes rooted in the very first Abrahamic story—the story of creation. In the Christian Bible, Eve is named; in the Qur’an, she is labeled as “Adam’s wife,” an inherent seductress and the ultimate downfall of man.<sup>95</sup> “Women are seen as sexual beings, who need to be sexually segregated and confined to the home. Otherwise, they believe women’s seductive powers would cause *fitnah* (social anarchy and chaos) because men are believed to have unappeasable sexual desire.”<sup>96</sup> The notion of women as “vessels of sinful sexual power” has led to fundamentalist ideology hellbent on controlling and restricting women’s sexual and social activities: “all sexual institutions (polygamy, repudiation and sexual segregation) established by Islam are aimed to constrain and control women’s power.”<sup>97</sup>

Institutions of sexual and social domination—such as the harem, polygyny, or laws regarding women’s companions—do not exist in more liberal Muslim societies; however, they are commonplace of Muslim fundamentalism. This includes ISIL’s captured territory, where women are often locked and restricted to a single building or encampment, forbidden to travel

---

<sup>94</sup> Ahmed, Leila. “Women and the Rise of Islam” *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*. Yale University Press, 1992. Pp. 45.

<sup>95</sup> Khelghat-Doost, Hamoon. *The Strategic Logic of Women in Jihadi Organizations*. Springer International Publishing. Kindle Edition. Pp. 15

<sup>96</sup> Nurmila, Nina. *Women, Islam and Everyday Life: Renegotiating Polygamy in Indonesia*. London/New York: Routledge, 2009. Pp. 27.

<sup>97</sup> Khelghat-Doost, Hamoon. *The Strategic Logic of Women in Jihadi Organizations* Springer International Publishing. Kindle Edition. Pp. 15.

beyond limited borders. For single women, their situation is often worse; they are restricted to a single building where they await a husband—who may already have a wife.<sup>98</sup>

The Qur'an permits polygyny in certain circumstances. Unlike Prophet Muhammad, who had 13 wives, the Qur'an permits men to have up to four wives:<sup>99</sup>

And if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan-girls, then marry (other) women of your choice, two or three, or four but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one or (the captives and the slaves) that your right hands possess. That is nearer to prevent you from doing injustice.

Many interpret the polygyny doctrine as maintaining that all wives must be taken care of and provided for equally. Verse 4:3 in the Qur'an forms the basis of religiously allowed polygyny in Islam.<sup>100</sup> Author Nina Nurmila, in her work *Women, Islam and Everyday Life: Renegotiating Polygamy in Indonesia*, gives three groups of interpretations in Islamic circles today. The first group are considered staunch textualists by Nurmila. These Islamists believe “that Islam permits polygamy and justify their opinion by referring to the Prophet Muhammad’s practice of polygamy.”<sup>101</sup> ISIL, and other Islamic extremists would fall into this category. For them, there is little gray area between what the Qur'an said and how it can be put into practice in reality. (This is true of most religious fundamentalists: the religious text often forms the sole foundation of their livelihood and is considered absolute truth). Nurmila has two other groups:

---

<sup>98</sup> Jaffer, Nabeelah. “The secret world of Isis brides: ‘U dnt hav 2 pay 4 ANYTHING if u r wife of a martyr.’” *The Guardian*, 24 June 2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/24/isis-brides-secret-world-jihad-western-women-syria>. Retrieved 20 February 2021.

<sup>99</sup> Qur'an 4:3

<sup>100</sup> Nurmila, Nina. *Women, Islam and Everyday Life: Renegotiating Polygamy in Indonesia*. London/New York: Routledge, 2009. Pp. 43.

<sup>101</sup> Nurmila, Nina. *Women, Islam and Everyday Life: Renegotiating Polygamy in Indonesia*. London/New York: Routledge, 2009. Pp. 43.

semi-textualists and contextualists.<sup>102</sup> For semi-textualists, polygyny in Islam is only permitted on a case-by-case basis; most often, the man must present evidence that he can afford to treat each wife equally. In a contextualist approach, the verse is read in the context of the time: polygyny was accepted as a form of marriage in early Islam, but is no longer relevant for today.

Today, polygyny around the world is only practiced in about 2% of households, disproportionately in Muslim-majority countries and in sub-Saharan Africa, where polygyny remains a common tribal practice.<sup>103</sup> Starting in the late 1950s, many laws were put in place to restrict the practice of polygyny in Muslim-majority countries: “national laws limiting or restricting polygyny were enacted in approximately half the fifty-seven countries comprising the Organization of the Islamic Conference.”<sup>104</sup> Polygyny thus became more of a fringe practice in Muslim countries, rather than a cultural norm.

## IV. Analysis

### A. Fundamentalism

Restorationist fundamentalist movements are based on the foundation of returning to near-perfect time or ideal. In the case of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, this perfect time is that of their respective prophets: a time of polygyny, consistent divine wisdom from the prophet himself, and little government intervention. Both of these groups work to instill a similar sense of prophetic wisdom and timeliness in their communities through a variety of tactics: namely, literal interpretation of the texts they hold so highly and the submission of women. In the latter,

---

<sup>102</sup> Nurmila, Nina. *Women, Islam and Everyday Life: Renegotiating Polygamy in Indonesia*. London/New York: Routledge, 2009. Pp. 43.

<sup>103</sup> Kramer, Stephanie. “Polygamy is rare around the world and mostly confined to a few regions.” Pew Research Center, 2020. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/12/07/polygamy-is-rare-around-the-world-and-mostly-confined-to-a-few-regions/>. Retrieved 11 January 2021.

<sup>104</sup> Warren, Christie S. “Polygyny” in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2009.

polygyny has become a vital factor of submission and control, a weapon of the patriarchal fundamentalist movements controlling both of these groups.

Religious fundamentalism is not a new phenomenon. Many fundamentalist movements emerge in opposition to a non-sacred or immoral society, oftentimes spurred by a charming leader, using literal interpretations of their texts to proffer their agenda. As cited in *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*:<sup>105</sup>

‘Fundamentalists’ within these...religious traditions, convinced of the conspiratorial nature of secularists and liberal religionists, adopted a set of strategies for fighting back against what is perceived as a concerted effort by secular states or elements within them to push people of religious consciousness and conscience to the margins of society. Male charismatic or authoritarian leaders emerged from each religious tradition, often in defiance of conventions and conventional leadership of the tradition.

While Smith and Prophet Muhammad are often noted as being charming, charismatic, and prophetic (which, some would argue, you must be to start a world religion), they are not the creators of a fundamentalist movement. Under this definition of fundamentalism—meaning a religious movement emerging against the immoral control of secularism—Smith and the Prophet Muhammad would not be considered fundamentalist leaders. That is an important distinction. Instead, those who take their divinity and prophetic sagacity literally are fundamentalists. In modern-day Mormonism and Islam—there are plenty, including the members of TLC’s *Sister Wives* and the leaders of Al-Qaeda and the Muslim Brotherhood.

---

<sup>105</sup> Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds. *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. Pp. 1

However, in this paper, I will focus specifically on fundamentalist leadership within the FLDS and ISIL: currently, they are the best examples of practitioners of religious polygyny and religious restorationism. (It is important to note that they are not the only practitioners of polygyny within Mormon fundamentalism or Islamic fundamentalism; other fringe groups will be discussed later.)

#### B. The Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

Spanning the border of Arizona and Utah lies the largest collection of Mormon polygamists in the world.<sup>106</sup> Life in Colorado City feels eons away from the modern-day United States. Women dress in prairie garb; their uncut hair piled high on top of their heads. Young boys play in stockings and oversized suspenders. There are no satellite dishes on top of homes, no morning newspaper delivery, no coffee makers or cigarette butts. Colorado City is home to three sects, though the largest of these is the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, led by the modern-day prophet Warren Jeffs. (Currently, Warren Jeffs is in prison for rape, though he still acts as the Church's Prophet and President.<sup>107</sup>)

Following The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints formal renunciation of its practice of polygyny in 1904 by then-President Joseph F. Smith, many Mormon members began to practice polygyny quietly.<sup>108</sup> Dead set on becoming mainstream in American thought, the Salt Lake City-based Church worked tirelessly to eliminate past evidence of polygyny and current practitioners of it, going so far as to have polygyny be a reason for excommunication.<sup>109</sup> "As the

---

<sup>106</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 5 and 10.

<sup>107</sup> Whitehurst, Lindsay. "Warren Jeffs gets life in prison for sex with underage girls". The Salt Lake Tribune, 10 August 2011. Retrieved 7 May 2019.

<sup>108</sup> "Statement by President Joseph F. Smith." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, May 1904.

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/topics/plural-marriage-and-families-in-early-utah/joseph-f-smith-statement?lang=eng>

<sup>109</sup> Hamilton, Michael William. *Educational Values and Practices of Fundamentalist Mormons*. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2017. PhD Dissertation. Pp. 4.



LDS Church moved from covert tolerance of polygamy to a genuine and sincere collaboration with law enforcement agencies pursuing its extirpation, the Mormon fundamentalist movement was born between 1890 and 1934.”<sup>110</sup> Instead of quashing the form of marriage the founder of Mormonism had widely championed, however, fundamentalist Mormons began to quietly practice polygyny in their own communities.

There is a wide consensus amongst Mormon polygynists today that the mainstream LDS Church is not practicing the original, true doctrine that was divinely given to Joseph Smith. Smith had claimed that his church was “the only true and living church upon the face of the earth.”<sup>111</sup> For Mormon fundamentalists—in the FLDS sect or not—to live out such a statement, this requires a strict adherence to Smith’s revelations, *including* that of polygyny.

“Fundamentalists believe that they are living the original tenets of the faith, a ‘restoration of all things,’ including cooperative economics, gathered communities, and the ‘patriarchal order of marriage,’ the polygyny of the Hebrew Scriptures.”<sup>112</sup>

The FLDS Church controls much of the community within Colorado City and its neighboring city, Hildale. There are FLDS educators in the school and FLDS police officers at the sheriff’s office. Indoctrination in the group’s beliefs start very young. Similar to ISIL, the group’s goal is to continue and maintain the living truth of the religion’s original prophet. Other more liberal Mormon polygynists usually live in Salt Lake City suburbs, and have wives inhabit separate homes to keep up appearances of monogamy (*à la Big Love*). However, in the FLDS of Colorado City, typically, wives share one household; many women aim to be the coveted first

---

<sup>110</sup> Parker, Stuart A. C. *History Through Seer Stones: Mormon Historical Thought 1890–2010*. University of Toronto, 2011. PhD Dissertation. Pp. 125.

<sup>111</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 69.

<sup>112</sup> Hamilton, Michael William. *Educational Values and Practices of Fundamentalist Mormons*. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2017. PhD Dissertation. Pp. 4.

wife—leading to generous and rare one-on-one time with a male, and first choice in bedrooms or home decorations.

The FLDS community—and by extension, Colorado City—is ravished by generational poverty. Given the sect’s strict gender roles—and gender imbalance caused by polygyny—between a third and eighty-percent of members receive food stamps, with residents of Colorado City receiving “eight dollars in government service for every dollar paid in taxes.”<sup>113</sup> <sup>114</sup> In 2016, top FLDS leaders were arrested due to allegations of food-stamp fraud.<sup>115</sup> Despite the seemingly anti-government, anti-institutionalist attitude of the FLDS, members tend to find loopholes to seemingly defraud government assistance. Each polygynous marriage, despite being outlawed in both Utah and Arizona, are cited as “spiritual marriages,” not civil marriages—and many women are therefore counted as single mothers under state laws. The high rate of “single” mothers and women allows for a record amount of government assistance to continually flood the community: this act is continually justified by the community’s leaders. “Fundamentalists call defrauding the government ‘bleeding the beast’ and regard it as a virtuous act.”<sup>116</sup>

In both the mainstream LDS Church and the FLDS, marriage is the pinnacle of everyday life. The LDS Church teaches that no one can reach “exaltation”—or heaven—without receiving the sacrament of celestial marriage.<sup>117</sup> Both the LDS and the FLDS Churches maintain that celestial marriage is one of the highest ordinances that a church member can achieve, as interpreted from the teaching of Joseph Smith in Doctrine and Covenants 132.<sup>118</sup> The FLDS

---

<sup>113</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 13.

<sup>114</sup> “81% on Food Stamps in Polygamous Colorado City.” KUTV 2 News Salt Lake City, 9 May 2013.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RmNYdRXM1Ms>. Retrieved 6 February 2021.

<sup>115</sup> “Top FLDS leaders arrested in Utah food-stamp fraud.” AZ Central, 23 February 2016.

<https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/arizona/2016/02/23/top-polygamous-leaders-arrested-in-utah-food-stamp-fraud/80814442/>. Retrieved 6 February 2021.

<sup>116</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 13.

<sup>117</sup> Kimball, President Spencer W. “The Importance of Celestial Marriage.” The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1976.

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1979/10/the-importance-of-celestial-marriage?lang=eng>

<sup>118</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 132

agrees with this claim but goes one step further. In the FLDS Church today, it is taught that in order to reach exaltation, a man must have at least three wives. “Three are needed for a rudimentary quorum, five wives are adequate for a medium quorum, but seven and sometimes twelve wives are required for the highest quorum of all.”<sup>119</sup> In the FLDS Church, it is preached more wives correlates to higher holiness, leading to younger women getting married off—often at the time of their first menstruation—to the most senior members of the church.<sup>120</sup> FLDS members practice placing, meaning the prophets of the Church serve as matchmaker, and decree when members get married.<sup>121</sup> Often times these “marriages” include incest or are illegal in Utah or Arizona, due to the age of the woman. At the time of Warren Jeffs’ conviction, many in the FLDS community reported that he had nearly 70 wives; he had married all but two of his late father’s wives after taking over the FLDS Church.<sup>122</sup>

For men in the FLDS Church, the pressure to find three wives is oftentimes daunting, and leads to an imbalanced gender ratio. One of the most oft-reported phenomena from the Southern Utah area is the amount of “lost boys” who are kicked out of the community for meager transgressions: watching TV or playing football.<sup>123</sup> Many are pressured to leave, too, in order to keep more women for the more senior members of the community.

The correct interpretation of Doctrine and Covenants 132 is a strong point of contention between the LDS and the FLDS Church. However, while the LDS Church, since abandoning the practice of polygyny in 1890, has interpreted the doctrine to mean one man and one woman, the

---

<sup>119</sup> Bennion, Janet. *Desert Patriarchy: Mormon and Mennonite Communities in the Chihuahua Valley*. Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, 2004. Pp. 135.

<sup>120</sup> Zeitzen, Miriam Koktvedgaard. *Polygamy: A cross-cultural analysis*. New York: Berg, 2008. Pp. 174.

<sup>121</sup> Watson, Marianne. “The 1948 Secret Marriage of Louis J. Barlow: Origins of the FLDS Placement Marriage.” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 2007. Vol 40. Pp. 83.

<sup>122</sup> Egan, Timothy. “Polygamous Community Defies State Crackdown.” *The New York Times*, 25 October 2005.

<sup>123</sup> Borger, Julian. “The lost boys, thrown out of US sect so that older men can marry more wives.” *The Guardian*, 2005. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/jun/14/usa.julianborger>. Retrieved 30 December 2020.

FLDS believe that no person can get into heaven *without* practicing polygyny. Doctrine and Covenants 132 states:<sup>124</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as you have inquired of my hand to know and understand wherein I, the Lord, justified my servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as also Moses, David and Solomon, my servants, as touching the principle and doctrine of their having many wives and concubines—

<sup>4</sup>For behold, I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory.

<sup>61</sup>...if any man espouse a virgin, and desire to espouse another, and the first give her consent, and if he espouse the second, and they are virgins, and have vowed to no other man, then is he justified; he cannot commit adultery for they are given unto him; for he cannot commit adultery with that that belongeth unto him and to no one else.

<sup>62</sup>And if he have ten virgins given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him, and they are given unto him; therefore is he justified.

In 132, Smith—from divine revelation from God—cites former practitioners of polygyny (though Isaac only had one wife, Rebekah) as justification for his new church to take on the marriage practice. The FLDS Church believes that in order to properly restore the “the only true and living church upon the face of the earth” that God commanded Smith to lead, polygyny must be practiced.<sup>125</sup> Present day polygynists, including the FLDS, consider themselves to be the

---

<sup>124</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 132

<sup>125</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 69.

“continuation of the true church that Smith created.”<sup>126</sup> In the minds of the FLDS, the LDS Church’s rejection of polygyny is a rejection of Smith’s most sacred principle; the mainstream Mormon church has gone badly astray. FLDS members are therefore the only ones who are being faithful to the original doctrines and orders of Mormonism, as decreed by Joseph Smith. It is their duty to restore Smith’s church, and to “set in the order the House of God.”<sup>127</sup>

The environment of the FLDS is one bound by control: the law of placing, incestuous and underage marriages, the lost boys, the church-run media, and marriages. Its central peak is polygyny—every member must marry and marry in accordance with Church leadership. Unique to other Christian fundamentalist movements, Mormon fundamentalism is one that actively works to restore a church started 200 years ago through a practice largely deemed unethical in the West. However, in the FLDS, it is a lifeline and foundation of being; it is also a weapon of control for church leadership. Polygyny serves as the foundation of the restorationist doctrine, as well as a weapon for controlling the family ties in the community and asserting the patriarchal order in the community. It’s an explosive illegality against the picturesque desert of the American Southwest.

While the FLDS may be the most famous of the Latter-Day Saint offshoots, there are an estimated 30,000-100,000 practitioners of polygyny in the United States today.<sup>128</sup> Many of them are associated with more liberal, fundamentalist Mormon practices: they wear jeans, live in Salt Lake suburban homes, and even have their own reality shows.

One such example is the Brown family, the first polygynous family featured in a reality show: *Sister Wives*. The Browns are a part of a fundamentalist Mormon sect, the Apostolic

---

<sup>126</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 7.

<sup>127</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 255.

<sup>128</sup> Duncan, E. “The positive effects of legalizing polygamy: “Love is a many splendored thing.” *Duke Journal of Gender Law and Policy*, 2008. Vol 15, Pp. 315.

United Brethren, a church group that believes in the righteousness of Smith's original teachings and the sacredness of polygyny, but holds more liberal beliefs. The AUB is headquartered about 20 miles south of Salt Lake City, and operates numerous private schools for its members, where children can learn the principle of plural marriage. Many of their members (an estimated 10,000) are encouraged to assimilate with their surrounding communities and not hide being polygynous.<sup>129</sup>

The Browns consist of patriarch, Kody, and his four wives: Meri, Janelle, Christine, and Robyn. While Kody converted to the faith in his early twenties, all wives were brought up in some form of Mormonism, often aspiring to become a sister wife. In contrast to the FLDS placing practice, Kody states that “Meri bonded with Janelle and Christine before it [marriage] was a serious thought in my mind.”<sup>130</sup> Kody's wives are explicit that if any woman is to enter into their homes, they view it as a marriage with *all of them*, not just a marriage to the patriarch. For their lifestyle, it is often the women who urge their husband to take on an additional sister wife; while this may seem illogical, the Brown wives share that more wives mean extra income, extra help with household chores, and more companionship.<sup>131</sup>

In contrast to the FLDS, where women as young as 12 are forced into “marriages,” practitioners of more liberal Mormon polygyny often aspire to be sister wives. The wives of who grew up in polygynous environments, looked forward to being co-wives due to help around the home and consistent companionship—though, above the age of consent.

---

<sup>129</sup> Bennion, Janet. *Women of principle: female networking in contemporary Mormon polygyny*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998. Pp. 22.

<sup>130</sup> “Meet Kody and the Wives,” *Sister Wives*, season 1, episode 1. TLC, 26 September 2010. <https://www.tlc.com/tv-shows/sister-wives/full-episodes/meet-kody-and-the-wives>.

<sup>131</sup> “Meet Kody and the Wives,” *Sister Wives*, season 1, episode 1. TLC, 26 September 2010. <https://www.tlc.com/tv-shows/sister-wives/full-episodes/meet-kody-and-the-wives>.

### C. Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

Deep in the unforgiving terrain of the Iraqi and Syrian desert are the remnants of one of the most formidable jihadist groups the world has seen in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant—known to many as ISIS, ISIL, or *daesh*—gained worldwide recognition for the relentless capture of Syrian territory during the country’s civil war, destruction of world heritage sites, and deplorable marriage practices. ISIL began in 1999 under the name of *Jama’at al-Tawhid wa’al-Jihad*<sup>132</sup> as an Al-Qaeda affiliate. The organization played a major role in the insurgency in Iraq during the American occupation in the early 2000s. In 2014, following the decline of American involvement in the Middle East, the group rebranded to the Islamic State, after receiving direction from the group’s spokesperson, Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, that the requirements for a Caliphate had been met.<sup>133</sup> <sup>134</sup> The call to restore the Prophet’s vision had been made, and thousands flooded to ISIL’s territory. It was also during this time that ISIL publicly beheaded several westerners and conducted several terror attacks across the globe, most notably the 2015 Paris Attacks, the attacks on Tehran in 2017, and the bombing of pop singer Ariana Grande’s concert.

Ideology serves as the largest factor in many people joining ISIL—and why many do not leave, even after witnessing brutality. For many within ISIL, and the FLDS, the self-righteousness of the “us against everyone else” is a very powerful motivator for staying in a difficult environment. Believing you are doing the right thing for religion, receiving constant affirmation from those around you—specifically authority figures and their interpretations of doctrine—and rejecting everything unholy is a simultaneously unifying and isolating experience.

---

<sup>132</sup> Translation: Organization of Monotheism (or Unity) and Jihad

<sup>133</sup> “Mapping Militant Organizations: The Islamic State.” Stanford University, October 23, 2017.

[https://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/print\\_view/1](https://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/print_view/1). Retrieved 20 February 2021.

<sup>134</sup> al-Adnani, Abu Muhammad. “This is the Promise of Allah.” 29 June 2014.

Even if you begin to waver in devotion to the cause, you are now straddling a unique gray area: you are in so deep with a group so far removed from society that there is very little room to turn back. Often, the only way is to push forward and hope that the original principles you have joined for are still values worth fighting for.

Many women in ISIL and the FLDS, even when confronted with alternate information about the groups they are part of, choose to stay. Ideology—including the threat of eternal damnation—is a powerful motivator for loyalty. ISIL famously rejects mainstream Islamic messages; they often distort doctrine to recruit and maintain foreigners (and their money) in their cause. Similar to the FLDS, who preach that they are restoring the true church—and thus the true community that God and Joseph Smith wanted—ISIL believes they are building a version of the world accountable to only Islamic doctrine and tradition. This version, or the Caliphate, is not at all possible within the limitations of any current state government. It is necessary to start from scratch in order to build a perfect utopia.

ISIL has gained a notorious reputation for recruiting foreign members—this doesn't just include combatants, but also women to its cause. At its height, ISIL is said to have between 15,000 and 30,000 foreign fighters, from over 80 countries.<sup>135</sup> <sup>136</sup> Despite reports of rape and abuse prevalent in ISIL territory, many new recruits are often foreign women, looking for marriage, companionship in other woman, and home stability—all things that the Islamic State has promised. Estimates put 10% of all Western members of ISIS to be women during its reign.<sup>137</sup> The tactics the State uses to attract women is similar to “pedophiles grooming young people online,” states Professor Mia Bloom, who has extensively studied the recruitment tactics

---

<sup>135</sup> Kumar, Revathi Siva. “UN Report On 15,000 Foreigners Joining ISIS Fighters In Syria And Iraq Will Shock You.” International Business Times AU, 3 November 2014.

<sup>136</sup> Sarhan, Arme. “CIA: 30,000 foreign fighters have traveled to Syria and Iraq to join ISIS.” Iraq News, 29 September 2016.

<sup>137</sup> Khelghat-Doost, Hamoon. *The Strategic Logic of Women in Jihadi Organizations* Springer International Publishing. Kindle Edition. Pp. 17.



of ISIL.<sup>138</sup> Many young women are recruited by communicating with older women, who explain the benefits of the organization's emphasis on family, marriage, child rearing, and companionship.<sup>139</sup> These young women—oftentimes not older than 18—are not contacted directly by the men themselves, but by other women promising an experience similar to the time of the Prophet (and satisfaction from marriage and possible sister-wives). Many young women report joining ISIL in the hopes of pursuing a romantic relationship.<sup>140</sup> In much the same fashion that the FLDS preaches that eternal satisfaction and glory can come only through the Church and celestial marriage, ISIL offers the only true rebuilding and restoration of Prophet Muhammad's Caliphate. For many, this chance is too good to pass up. In a recent study, it was found that ideology is a greater factor than any—including economic or political—in joining ISIL.<sup>141</sup>

Similar to the mainstream LDS Church's doctrine on marriage—that prescribes that one must be married in order to enter heaven—in a *hadith* by the Prophet Muhammad, he claims that the best of Muslims are those that are married.

'The best people of my nation (ummah) are those who get married and have chosen their wives, and the worst people of my nation are those who have kept away from marriage and are passing their lives as bachelors.'<sup>142</sup>

Marriage is a central part of life in ISIL. Women are consistently recruited to ISIL territory with the sole intention of being married off: this is strategic. Without having enough women, the

<sup>138</sup> Montgomery, Katarina. "ISIS Recruits Brides to Solve Middle East 'Marriage Crisis.'" Syria Deeply, 8 May 2015. <http://www.syriadeeply.org/articles/2015/05/7207/isis-recruits-brides-solve-middle-east-marriage-crisis/>

<sup>139</sup> Montgomery, Katarina. "ISIS Recruits Brides to Solve Middle East 'Marriage Crisis.'" Syria Deeply, 8 May 2015. <http://www.syriadeeply.org/articles/2015/05/7207/isis-recruits-brides-solve-middle-east-marriage-crisis/>

<sup>140</sup> Peresin, Anita. Fatal Attraction: Western Muslims and ISIS. Perspectives on Terrorism, June 2015. Vol. 9, No. 3. Pp. 24.

<sup>141</sup> Benmelech, Efraim and Esteban F. Klor. "What Explains the Flow of Foreign Fighters to ISIS?" The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. [https://scholars.huji.ac.il/sites/default/files/eklor/files/2018\\_tpv.pdf](https://scholars.huji.ac.il/sites/default/files/eklor/files/2018_tpv.pdf). Retrieved 20 February 2021.

<sup>142</sup> مُسْتَدْرَكُ الْوَسَائِلِ وَ مُسْتَنْبِطُ الْمَسَائِلِ / Mustadrak al-wasa'il. Compiled by Muhaddith Nuri. Vol 2, Pp. 531.

Caliphate cannot adequately rebuild. Unlike other Islamic movements that have often relied solely on the backs of men to propagate their ideology and extremism, ISIL specifically recruits and works to retain women in its territory. Women are called to traditional domestic duties, like childrearing and housework, however, they are also called to recruit other women to the Islamic State, spread ISIL's propaganda online, and educate young men and women in the ways of jihadi. ISIL, interestingly, does not put a huge importance on the birth of boys in its society over girls—an important differentiating factor from other extremist groups.<sup>143</sup> In a polygynous society, the birth of baby girls is welcome and holds strategic importance.

ISIL's acceptance and propagation of polygyny in its territory is two-fold. While ISIL promotes the religious and historical importance of polygyny, ISIL also uses polygyny to solve its problem of consistently widowed women. The expected survival rate for a jihadi fighter in Syria is 1.5 years, leading to an influx of widows in ISIL territory.<sup>144</sup> ISIL has pushed polygyny as a core part of restoring its Caliphate, emphasizing earlier Islamic doctrine: which capitalizes on the Prophet's wives and polyamorous culture of the Middle East.

Polygyny is a core part of restoring the Caliphate, as taught by the Islamic State. In both *Al-Naba*,<sup>145</sup> ISIL's official weekly newspaper, and *Dabiq*,<sup>146</sup> ISIL's online magazine, polygyny is spoken highly of. Women are encouraged to accept the practice without question. In an article published in *Dabiq* in 2015, female author Umm Summayyah al-Muhajirah wrote to persuade her fellow Islamic State sisters to accept a possible future of co-wifery: "Let every sister just put herself in the shoes of the wife of a *shahīd* [martyr] and sacrifice some of the selfishness that is

---

<sup>143</sup> Khelghat-Doost, Hamoon. *The Strategic Logic of Women in Jihadi Organizations* Springer International Publishing. Kindle Edition Pp. 62.

<sup>144</sup> Shams Agron in Khelghat-Doost, Hamoon. *The Strategic Logic of Women in Jihadi Organizations* Springer International Publishing. Kindle Edition. Pp. 95.

<sup>145</sup> Translation: the news

<sup>146</sup> From The Institute for the Study of War: "The title of the *Dabiq* magazine series has symbolic meaning. *Dabiq* is a small town in northern Aleppo, Syria, where, according to a well-known hadith about Armageddon, Muslims and "Rome" (generally interpreted to mean the West) will clash."

part of our nature.”<sup>147</sup> Her advocacy for polygyny was oft-repeated on ISIL’s most popular recruiting platform: Twitter. A female Malaysian doctor, who is an active member of the Islamic State on social media and lives in Syria, announced in January 2016 she was looking for a co-wife. In a Twitter message published to her page, she said:<sup>148</sup>

After I saw so many sisters are happy with polygamous marriage and after some reading, I finally understood. It was once a nightmare. But now I can see the invisible beautiful part of it. Put jealousy & emotions stuffs aside, its *fitrah* [common sense]. Let’s build a wonderful sisterhood. I’m searching for a co-wife.... sisters in *Dawlah* [ISIS], if you are searching for a wonderful husband and a sister-in-deen [religion], do contact me.

The doctor’s experience of actively searching for a co-wife is atypical: many women are placed in polygynous marriages in order to balance out the ratio of women to men in ISIL territory. While data on marriages in ISIL territory is nearly impossible to gather, a Syrian guesthouse book was published by the Combating Terrorist Center that tracked names and marital status of those who stayed in a house in ISIL territory. The data that shows 77% of 1,100 women who signed were married, compared to 30% of the men.<sup>149</sup> (The authors of this report assumed it was due to a lack of men prioritizing marriage and thus, not being married. However, I believe that the differing ratio is most likely due to the practice of polygyny.)

---

<sup>147</sup> Umm Summayyah al-Muhajirah in Khelghat-Doost, Hamoon. *The Strategic Logic of Women in Jihadi Organizations* Springer International Publishing, Kindle Edition. Pp. 95.

<sup>148</sup> Shams Agron in Khelghat-Doost, Hamoon. *The Strategic Logic of Women in Jihadi Organizations* Springer International Publishing, Kindle Edition. Pp. 95.

<sup>149</sup> Milton, Daniel and Brian Dodwell. “Jihadi Brides? Examining a Female Guesthouse Registry from the Islamic State’s Caliphate.” *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, May 2018. Vol. 11, Issue 5.

Due to the low survival rate of Jihadi fighters in ISIL territory, many women are constantly shifted amongst fighters, after the mandatory *iddah* (mourning) period.<sup>150</sup> Some are then thrust into polygynous marriages, specifically younger, foreign women, who are highly prized in the State.<sup>151</sup> Some, still, are given to men who specifically request young, virgin women: often they are captives of war, taken into slavery. Those who refuse are often killed to make an example of, and further weaponize the practice of polygyny: ISIL has reportedly executed over 250 women for refusing to marry.<sup>152</sup> ISIL's practice of polygyny is religiously justified but there are two different approaches to its practice. Some of its marriages have a strong foundation in Verse 4:3, while others are a modern form of slavery.

Polygyny and Islam have had a very fluid relation over the past millennia. While some extremist groups, such as ISIL, have taken advantage of polygyny-promoting doctrine in Islam, there are many polygynous marriages within mainstream Muslim families. In one of the largest Muslim-majority countries in the world, Indonesia, an estimated 5% of marriages are polygynous.<sup>153</sup> However, this number is often considered to be a low estimate, given that lower socio-economic and social class families may refuse to admit they are polygynous, nor register with the state. Similar to the Mormons of Utah, many polygynous families have adopted a "don't ask, don't tell" attitude between them and their governments.

In *Women, Islam and Everyday Life*, Nina Nurmila navigates the complexities surrounding polygyny in Indonesia through case studies of many families who practice it. In some prominent examples, women in Indonesia practice polygyny as a way to appease their

---

<sup>150</sup> "What To Do After Your Husband's Martyrdom." Radio Free Europe, 2015. <https://www.rferl.org/a/what-to-do-after-your-husband-martyrdom/26821892.html>. Retrieved January 23, 2021.

<sup>151</sup> Bloom, Mia and Charlie Winter. "The Women of ISIL." Politico, 2015. <https://www.politico.eu/article/the-women-of-isil-female-suicide-bomber-terrorism/>

<sup>152</sup> "ISIS's Persecution of Women." Counter Extremism Project, July 2017. <https://www.counterextremism.com/content/isiss-persecution-women>

<sup>153</sup> Gleeson, Hayley and Julia Baird. "Exposing the darkness within: Domestic violence and Islam." ABC News AU, 23 April 2017. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-04-24/confronting-domestic-violence-in-islam/8458116?nw=0>.

husbands and their religion. If they chose to reject their husband's wishes of getting a second wife, they would be rejecting God's ultimate authority.<sup>154</sup> In Nurmila's study on polygyny in Indonesian society, she found that wives often participated in the practice because they believed that polygyny was the best solution to avoiding divorce or an unhappy marriage, and not due to religious reasons. In some communities, polygyny is proffered as a "solution" to adultery. "Women have a limited capacity [to serve their husband's sexual needs]. Therefore, instead of letting my husband commit adultery, it would be better to permit him to practice polygamy" stated one wife who was interviewed.<sup>155</sup>

Many polygynous marriages in mainstream Muslim communities are seen as a continuation of Islam's rich history with polygyny. The choice to participate choice can be seen as empowering and as a greater chance to connect with the teachings of the Qur'an. However, some find it less than satisfying. In a research study conducted by Sisters in Islam, surveying over 1,000 people practicing polygyny, it was found that many first wives were coerced into accepting their husband's decision to practice polygyny.<sup>156</sup> Polygyny is seen as a better alternative to having an adulterous husband, a barren wife, or dealing with a divorce; all of these carry the weight of stigma. But, for some, choosing to follow Verse 4:3 of the Qur'an is an easier path in society.

---

<sup>154</sup> Nurmila, Nina. *Women, Islam and Everyday Life: Renegotiating Polygamy in Indonesia*. London/New York: Routledge, 2009. Pp. 81.

<sup>155</sup> Ong in Nurmila, Nina. *Women, Islam and Everyday Life: Renegotiating Polygamy in Indonesia*. London/New York: Routledge, 2009. Pp. 43.

<sup>156</sup> Carrick, Daniel. "What it's like to be in a polygamous marriage? Muslim Malaysians share their stories." ABC News, 14 February 2020.

## V. Conclusion

In the harsh, desert environments of Southern Utah and Northern Iraq, two entirely distinct, but eerily similar radical, fundamentalist groups rose with restorationist intentions out of the dry air.

For Mormon extremists in the United States, a rugged individualism combined with the longstanding polygynous traditions has carved out a unique society, one that rebukes nearly every American ideal—except that of freedom of religion and a pioneering spirit. For members of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, toiling away in the desert sun is not a punishment, but a welcome refuge while they wait for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The FLDS Church, since its official split with mainstream Mormonism in 1886, has been waiting patiently to “set in order the house of God” as Joseph Smith prophesied.<sup>157</sup> FLDS Church members believe only they are the honest fulfillers and restorers of “the only true and living church upon the face of the earth.”

In ISIL territory, 7,000 miles away from the desert of Utah, rests a similar-sized group of extremists, bound by religious principles and doctrine not so different from the fundamentalist Mormons of Utah. For ISIL members, they, too, believe they are the only ones capable of restoring the true Caliphate on earth, just as it was when the Prophet Muhammad preached. For them, their defense of territory in Syria and Iraq is not extremism, but protection of a divine and holy land—a refuge for the purest of Muslims in the world. The Caliphate is an action of divine will.<sup>158</sup>

---

<sup>157</sup> Krakauer, Jon. *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*. New York: Random, 2003. Pp. 255.

<sup>158</sup> Moussalli, Ahmad S. *Moderate and Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: The Quest for Modernity, Legitimacy, and the Islamic State*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1999.

At the intersection of these extremist movements is a marriage form practiced by both Jacob and lemur: polygyny. While polygyny, in both groups, has a strong religious and cultural foundation, polygyny has instead been turned as a tool of restorationist and fundamentalist tactics. In both the FLDS and ISIL, women are offered up to men due to the will of divine inspiration. Women are trapped in polygynous marriages, bound by their husband, but also by the social expectations of living up to their sister wives. It's a unit of control: limiting social contact beyond the immediate family unit, dictating procreation, and abusing religious beliefs. For the sake of the Caliphate and the "house of God," women are shuttled into marriages.

Since the earliest days of humanity, people have been practicing companionship and marriage of all forms. Some of it has served to strictly benefit a society by means of procreation, while some partnerships have become exploited by those in control. Polygyny today has largely become extinct, even those who practice it outside of extremist groups tend to be on the margins of society. Those in ISIL and the FLDS are not likely to forego the practice of polygyny any time soon, and with each passing day, more child brides are forced into polygyny. While the limitations for religious freedom are oft debated, the true colors of polygyny in restorationist environments are known: it is high time that policy and action take place to protect from the abuse that this societal structure has fostered, in the arid deserts of Utah and Syria.

### *Bibliography*

#### *Primary Sources:*

al-Adnani, Abu Muhammad. "This is the Promise of Allah." 29 June 2014.

The Book of Mormon. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2006.

Hinckley, Gordon B. The Family, A Proclamation to the World. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1995. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/the-family-a-proclamation-to-the-world/the-family-a-proclamation-to-the-world?lang=eng>.

Kimball, President Spencer W. "The Importance of Celestial Marriage." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1976.  
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1979/10/the-importance-of-celestial-marriage?lang=eng>.

مُسْتَدْرَكُ الْوَسَائِلِ وَ مُسْتَنْبِطُ الْمَسَائِلِ / Mustadrak al-wasa'il. Compiled by Muhaddith Nuri. Mu'assisa Al al-Bayt li Ihya' al-Turath, 1987.

Smith, Joseph, Jr. *Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of the Latter-Day Saints*. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2006.

"Statement by President Joseph F. Smith." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, May 1904. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/topics/plural-marriage-and-families-in-early-utah/joseph-f-smith-statement?lang=eng>.

The Qur'an, translated by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali, Ph.D. and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan.

#### *Journals and Academic Sources:*

Ahmed, Leila. "Women and the Rise of Islam" *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*. Yale University Press, 1992.

Anderson, Norman. "Islamic Law Today the Background to Islamic Fundamentalism." *Arab Law Quarterly*, 1987.

Bennion, Janet. *Desert Patriarchy: Mormon and Mennonite Communities in the Chihuahu Valley*. Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, 2004.

Bennion, Janet. *Women of principle: female networking in contemporary Mormon polygyny*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Benmelech, Efraim and Esteban F. Klor. "What Explains the Flow of Foreign Fighters to ISIS?" The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.



[https://scholars.huji.ac.il/sites/default/files/eklor/files/2018\\_tpv.pdf](https://scholars.huji.ac.il/sites/default/files/eklor/files/2018_tpv.pdf). Retrieved 20 February 2021.

- Blaydes, Lisa and Linzer, Drew. *The Political Economy of Women's Support for Fundamentalist Islam*. World Politics, 2008.
- Bretschneider, Peter. *Polygyny: A Cross-Cultural Study*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1995.
- Cross, Whitney R. *The Burned-over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800–1850*. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1950.
- Driggs, K. After the manifesto: Modern polygamy and fundamentalist Mormons. *Journal of Church and State*, 1990. Vol, 32. Pp. 367-390.
- Duncan, E. “The positive effects of legalizing polygamy: “Love is a many splendored thing.” *Duke Journal of Gender Law and Policy*, 2008.
- Esposito, John L., eds. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Hamilton, Michael William. *Educational Values and Practices of Fundamentalist Mormons*. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2017. PhD Dissertation.
- Hamblin, William J. "Reformed Egyptian." *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 1989–2011, 2007. Vol. 19: No. 1, Article 7.
- Khelghat-Doost, Hamoon. *The Strategic Logic of Women in Jihadi Organizations* Springer International Publishing. Kindle Edition.
- Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds. *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- Milton, Daniel and Brian Dodwell. “Jihadi Brides? Examining a Female Guesthouse Registry from the Islamic State’s Caliphate.” *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, May 2018. Vol. 11, Issue 5.
- Moussalli, Ahmad S. *Moderate and Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: The Quest for Modernity, Legitimacy, and the Islamic State*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1999.
- Nurmila, Nina. *Women, Islam and Everyday Life: Renegotiating Polygamy in Indonesia*. London/New York: Routledge, 2009.
- Parker, Stuart A. C. *History Through Seer Stones: Mormon Historical Thought 1890–2010*. University of Toronto, 2011. PhD Dissertation.

Peresin, Anita. Fatal Attraction: Western Muslims and ISIS. Perspectives on Terrorism, June 2015. Vol. 9, No. 3.

Smith, M. Revelation, Resistance, and Mormon Polygamy: The Introduction and Implementation of the Principle, 1830–1853. Boulder, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 2013.

Swenson, Paul. “Al Qaeda, Caliphate and Antonio Gramsci: One State, One Region, then One World?” Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, 2009.

Watson, Marianne. “The 1948 Secret Marriage of Louis J. Barlow: Origins of the FLDS Placement Marriage.” Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought, 2007.

Zeitzen, Miriam Koktvedgaard. Polygamy: A cross-cultural analysis. New York: Berg, 2008.

*Significant Textual Sources:*

Brodie, Fawn. No Man Knows My History. Alfred K. Knopf, 1945.

Krakauer, Jon. Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith. New York: Random, 2003.

Rubin, Barry. Guide to Islamist Movements. M.E. Sharpe, 2009.

Sardar, Ziauddin. Mecca: The Sacred City. Bloomsbury, 2014.

Smith, Joseph Fielding. Essentials in Church History. Salt Lake City: The Deseret Book Company, 1928.

*Other Sources:*

“2019 Statistical Report for April 2020 Conference.” The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 4 April 2020. <https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/2019-statistical-report>. Retrieved 21 February 2021.

“81% on Food Stamps in Polygamous Colorado City.” KUTV 2 News Salt Lake City, 9 May 2013. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RmNYdRXM1Ms>. Retrieved 6 February 2021.

Bloom, Mia and Charlie Winter. “The Women of ISIL.” Politico, 2015. <https://www.politico.eu/article/the-women-of-isil-female-suicide-bomber-terrorism/>

Borger, Julian. “The lost boys, thrown out of US sect so that older men can marry more wives.” The Guardian, 2005. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/jun/14/usa.julianborger>. Retrieved 30 December 2020.

Carrick, Daniel. "What it's like to be in a polygamous marriage? Muslim Malaysians share their stories." ABC News, 14 February 2020.

Egan, Timothy. "Polygamous Community Defies State Crackdown." The New York Times, 25 October 2005.

Glenn, Cameron. "Libya's Islamists: Who They Are - And What They Want." Wilson Center, 2017. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/libyas-islamists-who-they-are-and-what-they-want>. Retrieved January 5, 2021.

Gleeson, Hayley and Julia Baird. "Exposing the darkness within: Domestic violence and Islam." ABC News AU, 23 April 2017. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-04-24/confronting-domestic-violence-in-islam/8458116?nw=0>.

Grondin, Fr. Charles. "Why Is Polygamy OK in the Old Testament?" Catholic Answers. <https://www.catholic.com/qa/why-is-polygamy-ok-in-the-old-testament>. Retrieved December 29, 2020.

"ISIS After the Caliphate." Wilson Center, 21 November 2017. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/isis-after-the-caliphate-0>

"ISIS's Persecution of Women." Counter Extremism Project, July 2017. <https://www.counterextremism.com/content/isiss-persecution-women>

Jaffer, Nabeelah. "The secret world of Isis brides: 'U dnt hav 2 pay 4 ANYTHING if u r wife of a martyr.'" The Guardian, 24 June 2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/24/isis-brides-secret-world-jihad-western-women-syria>. Retrieved 20 February 2021.

"Joseph Smith." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. <https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/joseph-smith>. Retrieved 15 February 2021.

Kramer, Stephanie. "Polygamy is rare around the world and mostly confined to a few regions." Pew Research Center, 2020. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/12/07/polygamy-is-rare-around-the-world-and-mostly-confined-to-a-few-regions/>. Retrieved 11 January 2021.

Kumar, Revathi Siva. "UN Report On 15,000 Foreigners Joining ISIS Fighters In Syria And Iraq Will Shock You." International Business Times AU, 3 November 2014.

Lipka, Michael and Conrad Hackett. "Why Muslims are the world's fastest-growing religious group." Pew Research Center, 6 April 2017. <http://pewrsr.ch/2nOPNXY>. Retrieved 21 February 2021.

- Lipka, Michael. "Muslims and Islam: Key findings in the U.S. and around the world." Pew Research Center, 9 August 2017. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/08/09/muslims-and-islam-key-findings-in-the-u-s-and-around-the-world/>
- "Mapping Militant Organizations: The Islamic State." Stanford University, October 23, 2017. [https://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/print\\_view/1](https://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/print_view/1). Received 20 February 2021.
- "Massive German anti-militant raid." CNN, 11 December 2003. <https://edition.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/europe/12/11/germany.islamic.reut/>. Retrieved January 5, 2021.
- "Meet Kody and the Wives," Sister Wives, season 1, episode 1. TLC, 26 September 2010. <https://www.tlc.com/tv-shows/sister-wives/full-episodes/meet-kody-and-the-wives>
- Montgomery, Katarina. "ISIS Recruits Brides to Solve Middle East 'Marriage Crisis.'" Syria Deeply, 8 May 2015. <http://www.syriadeeply.org/articles/2015/05/7207/isis-recruits-brides-solve-middle-east-marriage-crisis/>
- "Plural Marriage and Families in Early Utah." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/topics/plural-marriage-and-families-in-early-utah?lang=eng>.
- "Plural Marriage in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 2014. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics/plural-marriage-in-the-church-of-jesus-christ-of-latter-day-saints?lang=eng>. Retrieved 12 January 2021.
- Samina. "Short Stories of Sahabah + List of Resources to Know More About Male Companions of the Prophet." Aeyina, 30 June 2019. <https://ayeina.com/stories-of-sahaba/>. Retrieved 11 February 2021.
- Sarhan, Arme. "CIA: 30,000 foreign fighters have traveled to Syria and Iraq to join ISIS." Iraq News, 29 September 2016.
- Snyder, Lauren. "Jews and Polygamy?" Jewcy.com, 16 May 2007. [https://jewcy.com/jewish-religion-and-beliefs/jews\\_and\\_polygamy](https://jewcy.com/jewish-religion-and-beliefs/jews_and_polygamy). Retrieved 10 January 2021.
- "Top FLDS leaders arrested in Utah food-stamp fraud." AZ Central, 23 February 2016. <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/arizona/2016/02/23/top-polygamous-leaders-arrested-in-utah-food-stamp-fraud/80814442/>.
- "What To Do After Your Husband's Martyrdom." Radio Free Europe, 2015. <https://www.rferl.org/a/what-to-do-after-your-husband-martyrdom/26821892.html>

Whitehurst, Lindsay. "Warren Jeffs gets life in prison for sex with underage girls". The Salt Lake Tribune, 10 August 2011.

"Wives of the Prophet," *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*. Edited by John L. Esposito.  
<http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e2508>. Retrieved 21 April 2021.

"Word of Wisdom." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.  
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics/word-of-wisdom?lang=eng>.

Zoellner, Tom. "Polygamy: Throughout its history, Colorado City has been home for those who believe in virtues of plural marriage," The Salt Lake Tribune, 28 June 1998.